

**PHYSICAL THERAPY BOARD OF CALIFORNIA
INITIAL STATEMENT OF REASONS**

Hearing Date: May 11, 2004

Subject Matter of

Proposed Regulation: Approved Physical Therapy Education Programs

Section Affected: 1398.30

PROBLEM ADDRESSED: The educational requirement to graduate from a United States accredited physical therapy educational program is now a post-baccalaureate degree. As currently written, Section 1398.30 could be interpreted to mean graduates of previously approved educational programs must obtain additional education in order to meet the educational licensure standards in California. This is not the intent of the Board. The Board has two primary filters to ensure applicants for licensure are qualified to practice physical therapy on California consumers. One is the requirement that educational programs must meet the approved criteria established in Section 1398.31 and the other is the successful passage of an examination based on current practice and as required by Business and Professions Code Section 2636. Both filters are effective in evaluating the competency of potential practitioners and neither one stands alone.

SPECIFIC PURPOSE: Current language is not clear that the intent of the regulation is to permit all applicants for licensure, including foreign educated, to qualify for the licensure exam if their educational program met the approved educational criteria at the time of their graduation from the program. Section 1398.30 could be interpreted to mean graduates of previously approved educational programs must obtain additional education in order to meet the licensure requirements in California. The Board proposes to amend section 1398.30 to clarify that applicants for licensure whose physical therapy educational programs met the graduation requirements at the time of graduation do meet the educational licensure standards in California.

FACTUAL BASIS: Business and Professions (B&P) Code Section 2650 provides that each applicant for licensure as a physical therapist shall be a graduate of a professional degree program of an accredited postsecondary institution or institutions approved by the board. B&P Code Section 2651 provides that physical therapy education programs accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education of the American Physical Therapy Association are approved. The educational requirement to graduate from an approved physical therapy educational program in the United States is now a post-baccalaureate degree. B & P Code Section 2653 requires foreign educated graduates to complete, in addition to other requirements, the equivalent professional degree to that issued by a United States accredited physical therapy education program in a physical therapy educational program that entitles them to practice in the country where the diploma was issued. The new requirement of a post-baccalaureate degree could adversely impact applicants for licensure who graduated from United States and foreign physical therapy educational programs that were approved at the time of their graduation.

UNDERLYING DATA: There is no underlying data.

SMALL BUSINESS IMPACT: Amending this regulation will not have a significant adverse economic impact on small businesses.

SPECIFIC TECHNOLOGIES OR EQUIPMENT: This regulation does not mandate the use of specific technologies or equipment.

CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES: No alternative considered would either be more effective than or equally less burdensome than the proposed regulation.